

Preface

This special issue of the *Nordic Journal of English Studies* is dedicated to Professor Karin Aijmer on the occasion of her retirement from the Chair of English linguistics at the English department, Göteborg University in 2006.

The seven contributions in this issue were first presented at a seminar in Karin's honor in January 2006. The seminar was intended as a tribute to Karin's particular love of informal intellectual meetings – “there will be coffee!” – and was part of ‘the contrastive seminar’ series at Göteborg University, which has served many a cup of contrastive observations over the last few years.

Karin's is exceptionally versatile as a linguist. Her research interests cover contrastive linguistics, pragmatics, modality and learner language, some of which are reflected in the contributions to this issue. Above all, however, the contributions illustrate Karin's keen interest in corpus linguistics. Bengt Altenberg, Stig Johansson and Hilde Hasselgård use parallel corpora to describe contrastive issues and Lars Lindvall uses corpus methods to solve problems of disputed authorship. Jennifer Herriman uses corpus methods to describe differences in self reference in argumentative texts by students of English compared to native speakers writing professionally or in an educational setting. Arne Olofsson composes his own corpus in order to provide empirical evidence to the study of the grammaticalization process of the Swedish verb *kommer* (without the following infinitive marker *att* (to)), and Göran Kjellmer uses the Co-buildDirect Corpus to throw light on the polysemy of the verb *risk*.

An exciting touch of uncertainty surrounded the planning of the seminar, as Karin was not informed about its preparations. Due to circumstances beyond our control, Karin was unfortunately at the last minute unable to attend the seminar, but we had the pleasure of her company at the following post-seminar event. I am therefore particularly pleased to present the papers in this issue and sincerely hope that they will be enjoyed by Karin and many more. A warm thank-you to the contributors for their participation, both in the seminar and in the publication of this issue.

Göteborg April 2007
Lene Nordrum